

Opt-Out Form for “Twelve Years a Slave” (2013, rated “R”)

March 2, 2017

Dear parents and guardians,

As part of our unit reading Toni Morrison’s *Song of Solomon*, we’ll be watching the film *Twelve Years a Slave* together in class. We will work through the movie with specific questions that students will answer independently. After we watch the movie, we will discuss it together as a group. Students will have a chance to share their feelings and observations.

It’s important for you to know that this film contains a great deal of adult content. The subject of this film is a true story; a free man, Solomon Northup, was kidnapped and sold into slavery. He wrote a memoir about his experience, and it was made into this Oscar-winning film. The horrible realities of slavery are plainly depicted. There are sexual situations, including implied rape, nudity, and implied sexual behavior. There are scenes of violence, hanging, whipping, stabbing, violent kicking, cutting with a razor, and other similar, violent scenes. There is a great deal of offensive language, especially racial slurs. There is also heavy drinking shown.

Please carefully consider whether you’d like your child to be exposed to this film. I hope you will keep in mind that these events are based on a man’s real life memoir, and are representative of the experiences of many of those who suffered under slavery. They actually happened. I personally believe that it is important for our students to know the history of our country from the perspectives of the people who lived in those times. This film provides an important background to the characters in *Song of Solomon*, who live in the first few generations of African-Americans after slavery.

If you would prefer *not* to have your child watch this film, please sign the form below, and send it back in. Your child would then read excerpts from the memoir instead. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out and let me know.

Best,

Mr. Nathan Day
English 11 teacher

I would prefer for my child *not* to watch *12 Years A Slave*. Please provide an alternate assignment.

Child’s name:

Parent’s name:

Parent’s signature: _____